



# BLACKJACK MONTHLY

21 DEC 2005

## TALENTS OF BLACKJACK

Blackjack is by far the best company in the Battalion, and probably the best in the Brigade. People do not know the talents they have beyond being the greatest mechanics on the planet. Our musically inclined are; SPC Mutinda and our new Company Commander CPT Jenkins who play guitar, SSG Jenkins on the keyboard & guitar, SPC Bell who sounds off the trumpet, and SPC Thomas, PFC Burke and SPC Mutinda are future American Idol singers. We have the artistic creativity of PFC Cupps and SPC Edilson. SPC Edilson has even painted logos and designs for the company to display our Blackjack pride, (note the picture of our CP door!). Of course not all of us can be talented in the arts, but our Soldiers have a way of making sports look as smooth as a jazz song and as rhythmic as a poem. Our football team has done great this Iraqi season with coach SGT Zachary Lewis. The players deserve recognition for their outstanding performance: PFC Blackmon, PFC Nauman, PFC Kim, SPC Mejia, SGT Zumdom, SGT Lett, SGT Williams, SGT Canady, SGT Davis, SGT Barrett, SSG Davis, SSG Pierre, and SSG Peterson; our hats off to all of them. PFC Burke, SPC Detweiler and PFC Havens along with many others also play football but were not able to play on the team due to other missions. We have a hockey player, PFC Bein, but unfortunately he doesn't see much ice in the desert. PFC Beasley is our baseball player and he often practices his pitching skills by throwing rubber balls at the Soldiers in the CP. SGT McCarley, SGT Peacock and SSG Peterson display their talents and release tension at the same time by lifting weights. SSG Peterson still holds the Division Power Lifting Champion title. As you can see, there is so much more to our Soldiers than turning wrenches, fixing weapons and repairing Night Vision Devices. We are a unique compilation of idiosyncrasies that make Blackjack the only place to be during our tenure in Iraq.

-1LT Amanda Durham

## Warrior's Dining Facility

The DFAC (Dining Facility) that operates on FOB Warrior that provides not only the Black Jack Soldiers with their meals, is also responsible for providing meals to all the units currently assigned to Warrior; which includes elements of the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 327<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 327<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment, the 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade Combat Team Headquarters, the Air Force, Department of Defense and Department of the Army Contractors and KBR employees themselves. The Dining Facility serves a total of four meals a day; breakfast, lunch, dinner and a midnight meal for those shift workers who otherwise wouldn't get three meals a day. The Dining Facility has two entrances into the meal serving area; both with a main line, pasta and taco line and short order line, where Soldiers can pretty much get what they want. Inside the seating area, they also have a pizza bar, baked potato bar and a salad bar. It's pretty hard to not find something good to eat at each meal. The Dining Facility has seating for roughly 900 personnel. Inside the Dining Area you will find four big screen TV's all tuned to AFN (American Forces Network) where while eating we're able to catch up on the latest events that are taking place around the world. The DFAC personnel do an outstanding job decorating for special events, and even dress up to match the holiday.

-WO1 Jeffery McCourtney





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## THE MAINTENANCE STANDARD DEFINED

Some “Webster’s” would define the word standard as; something established by authority, custom, or general consent as a model or example. Well my friends, this *small word* that places an outer limit on performance, has well been exceeded by this section. The NCOs and Soldiers of B Co Wheel Maintenance section are far above any *standard*. Let’s just say if they were half as professional, half as mission oriented and half as technically proficient, they’d still be twice the *standard*! This team replaced two separate maintenance sections flawlessly, in half the time allotted absolutely seamlessly. (It would have appeared to any outside customer or entity that nothing had change; no disruption in work, no massive hand receipt was inventoried, no classes on lessons learned or transition of equipment ever happened.) It was as if new soldiers showed up one day all knowing and prepared, took the mission and ran with it. Since they arrived this team has accomplished so much. From re-organizing the shop, to creating and organizing a huge repair parts area in order to, yet again, ensure 426<sup>th</sup> is always above any *standard*. So to you, the friends and family members at home; let it be known that the members of B Co Wheel Maintenance exceed any set *standard*. And to those who chose to set *standards*; beware of the most Professionally Orientated and Technically Proficient Wheel Maintenance Team the Army, nay the WORLD has ever seen; we will conquer your standard! Blackjack Wrench Out!

- WO1 Joseph Poisson



## SOLDIERS OF C & E

The Soldiers of the Communications-Electronics section are mission ready and dedicated to their duty of providing support to the 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade Combat Team as well as to the entire area of operation. The Soldiers in the shop strive to maintain capable full mission support and to provide quality maintenance and substantial Communications- Electronic equipment to everyone on the team. Since our arrival the shop has been on a successful mission, to not only learn about some of the latest equipment available to soldier but to become experts on equipment such as the Blue Force Tracker system and the Warlock system. This equipment’s serves as tracking and counter-measure devices.

As our deployment continues we are certain that with the speed, knowledge, and perseverance of the Soldiers in the Communications-Electronic section, we will without a doubt make this combat deployment a complete success. Thank you all back home for your unconditional support. God Bless and Happy Holidays.

- WO1 Pablo Melendez





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## The New Commander

Hello to all and happy holidays. I am CPT Matt Jenkins, the new Blackjack commander. I want to thank everyone for such a warm welcome to the team. All of you have made a wonderful and lasting impression. I can not tell you how enthused I am to have such an opportunity to lead such fine Soldiers. To everyone back home, I want to tell you we are doing well and we think of you all daily. Thank you your support.

Most of us remain at FOB Warrior supporting the Brigade's Mission to build a credible Iraqi security force. We have made great progress in reaching this goal, but it is still a long while away. This is my fourth time over here and I can tell you it is getting better. We have completed many jobs, missions, and recoveries. We have fabricated several items with our welders. We continue to keep focused on what is most important.

I know some ask "when do you think you will come home?" I answer this frankly; we will come home when we get on a plane. Please do not let rumors of redeployment become devastating news when proved false.

I wish congratulations to LT David McCormick and LT Amanda Durham on their promotion to First Lieutenant. I will expect more from both as they continue with their military careers. David McCormick is doing great things with the Iraqi Army. I can say with reasonable certainty his job is most unique, challenging, and rewarding. Amanda has proved herself as a competent officer and insightful leader. I look forward to working with both of these fine professionals.

As we gain first hand experiences of historic events a half way around the world, I hope you will remember the many blessings we share as Americans and pray for our safe return. The sacrifices we make now will seem small, but will remain everlasting to a nation in need of our help. Have a Happy Holiday Season. God Bless you and our brave Soldiers.

Blackjack! Air-Assault! CPT Matt Jenkins



## Who you gonna call???

In a Field Maintenance Company one of the smallest sections, often taken for granted, is Recovery. While Wheel Shop is breaking bolts, and C&E Section is frying circuit boards, Recovery has a dual mission. Aside from being the sole recovery asset for this base and the surrounding vicinity, they also work alongside the welders of Service Section during the normal duty day. You can think of them as a sort of EMS for wheeled vehicles, an EMS who moonlights as a mechanic. These six high speed and highly motivated Soldiers were hand picked to be part of the most elite group within this Maintenance Company. The section consists of SSG Pierre, SGT Peacock, SPC Street, SPC Moss, SPC Durham, and SPC Terrell. These soldiers are on call 24/7 and if a vehicle breaks down outside the wire, they work tirelessly to bring that vehicle where it needs to go. "These wreckers make for a wild ride", says SPC Terrell, "When you hook them up to some of the larger vehicles, the cab bounces around a lot. It's like sitting in a popcorn pan." According to SPC Durham, the local national haulers make for some difficult missions. "Their vehicles are really hard to tow, and they are always getting in to some sort of trouble", he says. Needless to say these men are working hard and saving lives in their own way. So when you're rolling along and your wheel falls off, who do you call? When you hit a big bump and your trailer flips





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over, who comes to the rescue? The answer is clear and simple, Recovery Section.

-2LT Kyle Carter



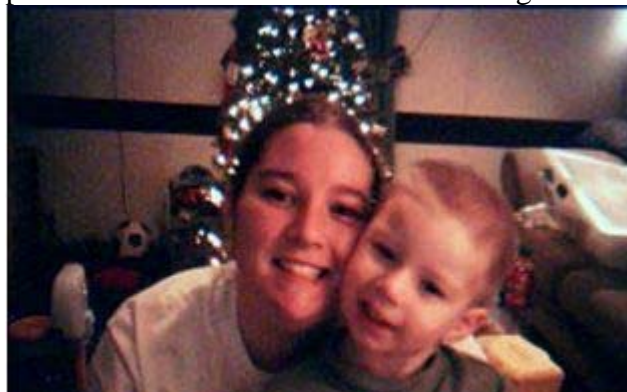
SPC Terrell and SPC Durham

## SHOP OFFICE SOUP DISH 1LT MICHELLE R. CLAUSEN

I was thinking of this article and decided I would focus on our “Babies”...the Shop Office Babies. NOW...let me elaborate on another incident that led me to this. I was searching for face paint for SPC Lane last night because he was going to the Brigade Soldier of the Month Board, and I had to dig into all of my gear to find it, without any success....but what I did find, after I put everything away back into my tuff boxes was one really long, strawberry blonde hair dangling from one of my boxes. I immediately picked it up like somebody examining evidence wondering what the heck it was...and realized that the one little hair belonged to my daughter, Katey Bug. I was so overwhelmed by this that I cried like a baby for 20 minutes. Just simply

because it was a part of her, HERE, in this place with me. I immediately put it in an envelope and labeled it “KATEY’S ONE LITTLE HAIR” and I know I will keep it forever. I am sentimental like that. I will give it to her when she grows up and remind her that I missed her so much that I kept a hair because it reminded me of her.

I went to work today to the shop, and looked around, and saw that the whole shop was full of pictures of all of our “Babies”....and figured out



## JAYLEN AND ALEX MUTINDA. DECEMBER 2005. TWO LITTLE ANGELS!!

that I wasn’t the only one feeling the pain of leaving our little ones behind. When you first walk in to the building, you see SPC Thomas, SPC Mutinda, SPC Hogan, SGT Barretts’s, and SPC Kekoa’s desks. On the walls you will see big poster boards with all the pictures of their babies and their families on them. I see them everyday, as if those kids are here with us. Then you walk to my part of the shop, and my Katey’s picture is also everywhere. There is not a moment that goes by in this deployment when our children are not looked at. They are EVERYWHERE...and it is a beautiful site to see. They are the faces of hope and the future of everything we are here for. When all is lost upon us, the children remain the focal point of everything we do and hope to accomplish here. They appeal to the humanity in all of us. Even if they are not our own. BUT it does not take away from the fact that we miss every one of our “Babies.”



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away from them to make the world a better place.



**BEAUTIFUL SHELBY GORE –  
DAUGHTER OF OUR FAVORITE  
CONTRACTOR HERE AT FOB  
WARRIOR, TJ. SHE DEFINITELY GETS  
HER LOOKS FROM HER MOTHER!**



**HANDSOME ALEX GORE STOPPING  
TO SMELL THE ROSES!!!**



**MARC BARRETT JR., SHAMAR,  
AND AMESHA! SMILING FOR DADDY!!**

The bottom line is we miss our kids...and we love them...and without them—as is evident to every single moment we are here—we would be doing this for nothing.

Even though this is the hardest time of year to be away from our families, we hope one day our children will look upon us with pride. We are

**THIS IS FOR ALL OF OUR CHILDREN:**

**THIS IS FOR ALL OF OUR CHILDREN:**

MICHAEL THOMAS	9 MONTHS
OLD	
TRINITY HOGAN	8 MONTHS
OLD	
ALEX SHEPHERD	3 YEARS OLD
JEREMIAH KEKOA	5 YEARS OLD
JOSIAH KEKOA	7 YEARS OLD
AMESHA BARRETT	5 YEARS OLD
SHAMAR BARRETT	7 YEARS OLD
MARC BARRETT JR.	10 YEARS OLD
CHAMQUEZ JENKINS	9 MONTHS
OLD	
CHAVEZ JENKINS	5 YEARS OLD
CHAZ JENKINS	9 YEARS OLD
RICHIE WARMOUTH JR.	4 YEARS OLD
KATEY CLAUSEN	7 YEARS OLD
ALEX GORE	3 YEARS OLD
SHELBY GORE	6 YEARS OLD

P.S. WE MISS YOU KAY!!! TAKE CARE OF YOU AND YOURS. KISS THEM FOR US!



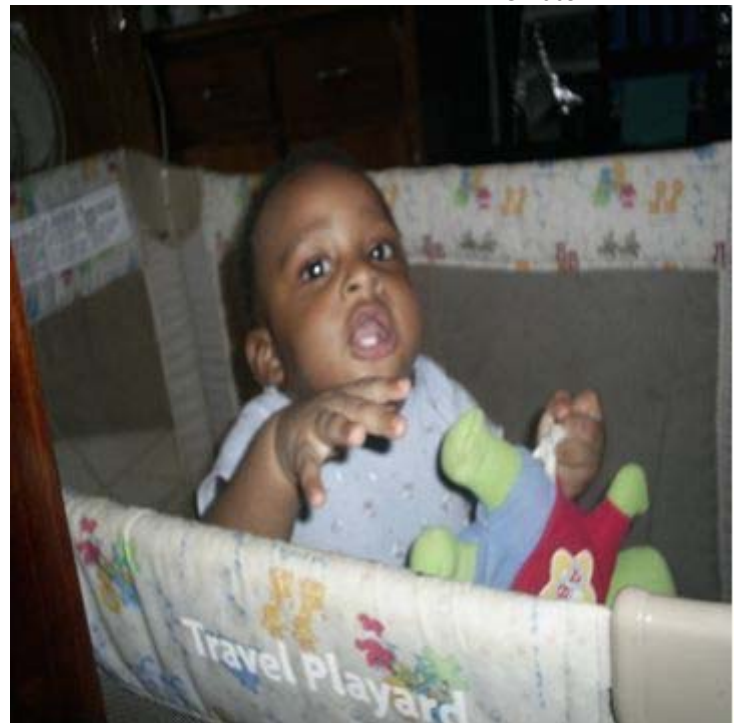


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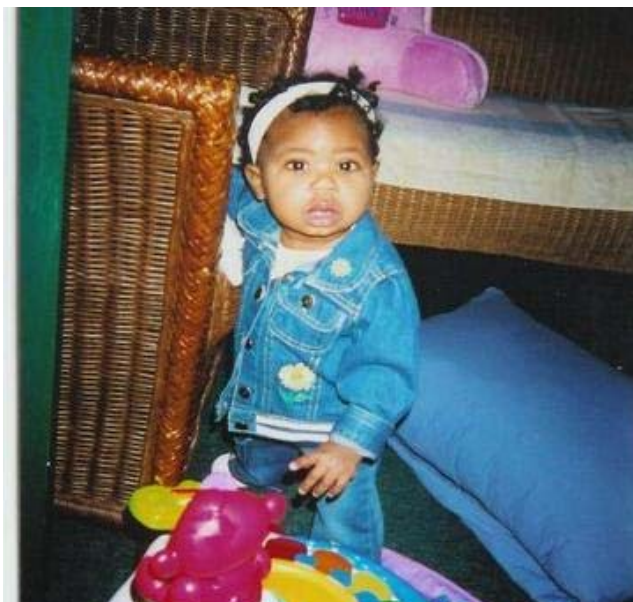
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**KATEY CLAUSEN AND MOMMY ON MY BIRTHDAY—02 JANUARY 2005. SHE WAS GIVING ME KISSES....**



**MICHAEL THOMAS REACHING OUT FOR HIS MAMA! OR TRINITY HOGAN??? THEY ARE BASICALLY THE SAME AGE! THEY WOULD MAKE A PERFECT PAIR!**



**TRINITY HOGAN – WHAT A BABE! SHE IS MOST CERTAINLY THE PRINCESS! OUR SHOP OFFICE GIRLS ROCK!!!**



**AMESHA BARRETT—CHILLING IN THE POOL! LIKE I SAID BEFORE....OUR SHOP OFFICE GIRLS ROCK! SGT B—YOU'RE IN BIG TROUBLE WHEN THIS LITTLE ONE GROWS UP!!**



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## Top Ramblings by 1SG Freeman

It is hard to believe December is here already. We already have Soldiers in the States on R&R leave and everybody looks forward to their turn. SPC Lane from B Company Maintenance section has accomplished the impossible. He is the first support Soldier to ever when the Brigade Soldier of the Quarter Board. He won the Battalion Soldier of the Month for November and would have competed in the Division Board had he not gone on leave. I'm sure he would have represented us well because the Brigade alternate won the Division board. This is a major accomplishment for a support Soldier in a Infantry Brigade. I would also like to congratulate SGT Buff and SPC Thomas for an outstanding sweep of December's NCO and Soldier of the Month. This month has been a festive one in preparation for the holidays. We have our Blackjack Christmas Party on December 25. Our holiday DVD should reach the family readiness group by the next meeting on 6 Jan 05. We will attempt to get 30 min DVDs of your Soldiers to every meeting. There will always be a few missing but don't fret we will try to get them next month. Congrats to WO1 Poisson on promotion to Chief (CW2) and to SGT Cokenour, SGT Buff for a six year re-enlistment. SGT Cokenour and PFC Worm will be making their way to Las Vegas to spend some of their R&R leave.

The Blackjack Soldiers send a big thank you for your generosity. I want to send big shout out to the Gun Platoon for completing over 30 missions for 1,400 miles to 7 outlying Forward Operating Bases without incident or accident. Those that know anything about driving over here know that this is a major accomplishment.



**SGT Buff and SPC Thomas**  
**Battalion NCO/Soldier of the Month for December**



**From Bottom Left to Top Right**  
**SGT Chard, SSG Alcivar, SGT Orozco,**  
**SGT McCarley, PFC Burke, PFC Beasley,**  
**PFC Bein, SPC Bell, and PFC Banks**